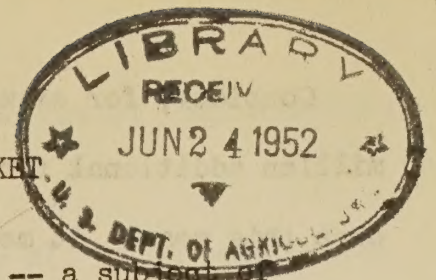


30 Speech information for  
REA field personnel.

130 ELECTRIC FARMING GETS MORE TO MARKET



I want to talk with you today about farm production -- a subject of national importance, but one which must be considered primarily on a local level. For it is on the farms and in the fields of America that we must produce the great quantities of food and fiber needed to meet our own requirements and those of our friends throughout the world. You people here in \_\_\_\_\_ have your own important part of this national effort.  
(area)

I do not have to tell you that America today is up against a test of strength such as it never before faced. This becomes clearer to us as we read our daily papers, listen to the radio and watch the television screen. I believe it is also clear to us that whether we win or lose this struggle for a free and peaceful world will depend on how effectively we can mobilize the production power of this great Nation. That is why I want to talk to you about production and the part you can play in it.

We know that our Communist enemies have great hordes of manpower. If it ever came to the point where the outcome of this struggle would be decided on the basis of numbers alone, our future indeed would look dark.

But America's strength consists of a great deal more than mere numbers of people. One of its biggest assets is a productive power never equalled in history. That productive power, as you know, served us well in World War II.

It will serve us well again in the present situation; but we must hold to the course that has worked so well for us in the past and put more power, more efficiency and more capacity into our country's industrial and agricultural plant. We must make the best possible use of this asset.

What you and your neighbors are doing and have been doing to bring productive electric power to agriculture is exactly the kind of thing that is making America stronger today than at any time in her history.



Consider, for example, that since the time of Pearl Harbor nearly three million additional farms have been connected to electric power lines. What does this mean? It means simply this: in America today nearly nine out of every ten farms are in a position to produce more and better products and to produce them with less manpower.

That, it seems to me, is a contribution to the country's strength that is difficult to match in any part of our mobilization program. Just suppose that a new kind of efficient power -- power capable of drastically cutting manpower needs and increasing output -- had been brought to better than 85 percent of our factories since Pearl Harbor. If such a thing had taken place, it would have resulted in big headlines from coast to coast.

Without headlines and fanfare, your co-op and about a thousand others throughout the country have dramatically increased the productive capacity of our agriculture. And in the troubled times ahead, I predict this accomplishment will be an everlasting blessing for us all -- consumers, soldiers, factory workers, all of us who need food in order that we may carry on our own part for our country and our free world.

Rural electric co-ops like yours are serving nearly three and one-half million rural families. You and other rural people throughout the land have built a giant production plant. There is nothing like it in all the world.

But building this giant production plant, increasing the farmers' productive capacity by bringing electric power to the farmstead is not enough. This capacity has to be put to use in order to have any real meaning. The big job ahead now is to put these kilowatts into overalls, to put them to work wherever practical for increasing farm production.

Many of you have been making good use of your co-op electricity. Your consumption of electric power is going up and up, indicating that you are applying it more and more to productive uses. Farm consumption along your lines increased from \_\_\_\_\_ kwh in December, 19\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ kwh in December, 19\_\_. This is



good, but the time has come, I believe, when even greater use of your electricity is called for.

As I see it -- and I think you will agree with me -- all of us have an important job to do for national security. This is particularly true of those of us who are engaged in agriculture. Food and fiber production for our Nation and our Allies is an essential part of our mobilization effort, and increased production is urgently needed.

It is an encouraging fact that we started the year 1952 with electric service on about 85% of our farms. Naturally, all of you, and all of us in REA, realize that electric power is essential to the functioning of the national economy. We know that maximum farm production is not possible without electricity.

The Nation has been losing ground in the production of many critical farm commodities. We are facing heavier demands than ever in 1952. Therefore, the contribution of rural electrification to national mobilization should be very obvious -- so obvious that it is difficult to understand why anybody should raise a question about it.

The question is being raised, however. We are even hearing the old argument that electric service for the farmer is a luxury -- that farmers who've done without electricity throughout the years should be able to get along without it for a while longer.

Let's correct any such misunderstandings. Let's consider the facts. Electric service on farms is not a luxury -- it's even more vital for farmers than for people who live in cities. Electricity means comfort and convenience to the city family, it is true. But to the farm family it means that and much more -- it means production power.

The job ahead of American farmers is a bigger one than any they've faced before, even in the trying days of World War II. First of all, our population is increasing; it went from a little more than 131½ million in 1940 to nearly



152 million in 1950. The increase is continuing at the rate of about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million a year. Also, people are eating more; civilian food consumption is up and military demands are great. In this connection, you should know that it takes a good deal more to feed men in the armed forces than in civilian life.

And in addition to domestic needs, we're facing heavy requirements from other countries; we're exporting more food products than ever before. Even so, limitations on certain items keep us from meeting all demands from abroad.

Another factor we should not overlook is the help that high farm production can give in curbing inflation. When there isn't enough of any food to meet the demand, naturally the retail price goes up. When supplies increase, however, prices become stable. Therefore, high level food production contributes tremendously to economic welfare.

But two factors are operating against an increase in food production. First, there is very little new crop acreage that can be put into production. Secondly, there is a fast-growing shortage of farm labor. In the year between September 1950 and September 1951, for example, the farm labor force decreased more than 350,000.

Electric power is a great single force that can help the farmer meet these shortages of land and labor -- help him improve the quantity and quality of his crops -- and help the Nation by increasing the production of needed food and fiber. There are at least 250 productive uses of electricity on the farm, but I'm sure that few farmers in this state, or any other, are realizing its full potentialities.

The Department of Agriculture, deeply concerned with the entire food production problem, has announced the highest farm production goals since before World War II. Furthermore, the Department has made it clear both to the rural electric suppliers and to REA that the whole Nation will benefit from the help given farmers in harnessing electricity to farm production. We know that, at the same time, the farmer himself will benefit by using electricity to improve



his efficiency of operation. Electric farming saves him labor, cuts his losses and increases his production. And, naturally, it will be of benefit to the co-ops which will build up a sounder volume of business when their consumers use more power to increase output. Electric farming gets more to market. At the same time it increases the income of the individual farmer and builds a sounder volume of business for the co-op.

In order to get a more aggressive electric farming campaign under way, a conference was held in St. Louis recently. Representatives of REA, NRECA, USDA, State Power Use Committees and the Statewide Associations, met for three days, to make plans for doing the job. It was decided that State and local action would be necessary for a successful outcome.

And that action started just as soon as the conference ended. Many intensive co-op power use campaigns are now under way; electrification advisers have been mobilized for special training and production work; on-the-farm demonstrations of productive electrical equipment have been arranged; power use information is being circulated to co-op members in every way possible.

It should be remembered that electricity not only increases production directly. In many cases, it will increase production indirectly, through eliminating waste.

For example, it is estimated that, on the average, about 25% of hay is lost by rain at harvest time. Also, a considerable part of the food value of legume hay is lost in field curing and harvesting, because of leaf shattering. The use of an electric-powered hay drier can almost eliminate this waste.

The point I want to make is that your primary job now is to increase production -- using electricity in every way possible in our dairying, poultry production, crop conditioning, water-pumping or supplemental irrigation.

(USE SOME LOCAL EXAMPLE HERE)



If you remember that a farmer can get 10 hours of hard work for a kilowatt hour of electricity, you will realize the importance of electric power as a means of increasing production.

Also, it is important to preserve your present equipment by proper care and good wiring practices. Much equipment is now hard to replace, and its loss is a loss not only to you, but to the Nation's production effort.

It is extremely important for co-op members to make the best possible use of the power now available -- to conserve power as well as the tools you work with. I suggest that you give consideration to increasing use of electricity in off-peak periods. Your co-op officials (electrification adviser) will give you further information and suggestions along this line.

I'm sure it is quite clear to you that by increasing farm production you are contributing to our national security, to your own security and to the security of your co-op. Your co-op has another important role in these times, however. A cooperative like yours is a small democracy, and because democracy as a way of life is being challenged throughout the world, you co-op members have a special duty to set an example for others in making democratic processes work.

This is, perhaps, a less tangible duty than increasing production. It is just as important, though -- and in the long run, possibly even more important. For after all, if democracy is going to work, it has to work on the local level first. And if we do not keep our democracy alive, we shall have lost the very thing we are trying to protect through a great national effort.

Let me urge you to take an active part in the affairs of your co-op. Attend annual meetings, also district meetings, if you have them. Speak your mind frankly. Ask questions, talk to your directors, manager or educational adviser. Read your co-op's newsletter and bulletins. Talk with the newsletter editor or write to him. Turn in news items which you think might interest or help other members. If you are using electricity to good advantage, if you have found



some new way to put it to work, let your neighbor and other members know about it.

(If co-op does not have newsletter, speaker should eliminate above reference, and suggest publication of a letter.)

The emphasis now is on more production. But I cannot urge you too strongly to work at the business of keeping your cooperative strong. As a Nation we are no stronger than the work and the efforts and the output of our people. The same is true of your co-op. It is no stronger than the support given by its members. It can serve you and your community only in proportion to what you put into it.

Your cooperative will want to work closely with other farm agencies and local groups in community development. You will want, of course, to participate in the civil defense program, offering your communication and transportation facilities and your special skills.

There are those who would destroy our Nation and there are those who would destroy your co-op. In both cases the right of free men to do their own thinking, to serve themselves as they think best, is involved. Neither can or will be destroyed if we as individuals work and produce for them. This, I am sure, you are going to do. You will meet your production goals and you will meet your responsibilities as co-op members, with the final result that your co-op, your community and your Nation will become even stronger.

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